party squabbles to influence them in the selection of our representative or representatives. I have been watching the party politics of the State with great disappointment. The bewildering changes of party label by members of the Council show a lack of political education and laxity of principles, which augur ill for the future. Let me hope it is a passing phase. I am entrusting a grave responsibility to you in the firm belief that in your hands the prestige of my Family will be safe and that you will not do anything which will undermine the ultimate Constitutional Headship of my Dynasty. There need not be any conflict between a Constitutional Ruler and his Subjects. There is a lot which you and I can learn from the English. You may hate British Imperialism; but the sober Englishman is a subject worthy of study and his lack of political fads and fancies is worthy of copying if we want to build up strength.

Let me close this statement. I know the anxiety with which many of you have been awaiting it. I believe I have largely expressed sentiments which will find an echo in your hearts It is not all generations of men who get an opportunity to render service of such magnitude to their country and people. To those of you who are young here is the chance to forget self and work with united effort for the good of Kerala and India. It is something worth striving for and achieving. You have still a future before you and if success attends our efforts, you can honourably and happily live a life whose pattern you will have designed and constructed yourselves. To those of us who are old it is a great satisfaction to know that we are helping to build a future for Kerala and India which will inure to the benefit of posterity and the greatness of our country. For myself I thank God for vouchsafing me the opportunity to serve my people and my country in a manner which I hope will ultimately add to their strength and glory. I don't seek any reward except the fulfilment of the dream which I have been cherishing all these years—the UNIFICATION OF KERALA. That is all. May God bless our efforts".

Opening Speech by the President

Mr. President: *Honourable Members,*

The year that has passed since last I addressed the House has been marked by a number of events of more than usual significance. Very soon after the close of the last Budget Session came the end of the war against Japan. The transition from war to peace conditions has proved longer and more difficult than had been anticipated. The devastation caused both in Europe and in Asia has made recovery slow throughout the world. Here our difficulties due to short supplies of food and clothing have been increased by a certain degree of unemployment consequent on the discharge of men from war service and the cessation of military works. Prices moreover still remain high, and the cost of living shows no sign of falling.

Last December the whole State celebrated with enthusiastic affection the 80th birthday of His Highness the late Maharaja. But all too soon after that happy anniversary His Highness breathed his last and was succeeded as ruler by His present Highness, who marked his accession by the issue of a liberal statement announcing the immediate grant of further instalment of responsible Government, the creation of a Second Minister and the transfer to ministerial control of more departments including Municipalities, Medical, Registration, Anchal and Labour. The statement also looked forward to the time—not far distant—when the State might enjoy the benefits of full responsible Government, and inaugurated a system of consultation between the Diwan and the Ministers regarding the more important of the affairs of the State. His Highness believes that the time has now come to undertake an examination of the possibility of further advance and to this end he proposes to submit the whole of the Government of Cochin Act to examination in order that it may be so further amended as to permit further extension of the sphere of responsible government. A Committee has for the last few months been working out proposals for the widening of the franchise which must be the foundation of any effective development of democratic institutions.

The gracious message from His Highness which I have just had the honour to read demonstrates the close attention with which His Highness has been watching the constitutional discussions which have been taking place between the Cabinet Mission and political leaders in British India, and the keen desire which His Highness feels that this State should be able to play a worthy part in the independent India of the future. The formation of the Constituent Assembly brings to the fore a number of questions upon which it will be necessary for decisions to be taken; and it is His Highness' desire that in formulating opinion upon these questions representatives of the people of the State should share, and he is at present considering how best this desire may be translated into action.

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The Council has during the past year passed a resolution asking the Government to set up a committee to ascertain the degree to which corruption is prevalent in the public services. The Government intends to take action on this resolution, and the only reason why it has not already done so is its desire to associate the permanent Chief Justice with this Committee. The Committee will be formed as soon as possible after he returns to the State.

Before I refer to the Budget for the coming year which is to be the main business of this meeting of the Council there is one matter to which I desire to invite the attention of Hon'ble Members. During the past months there has been what I can only term an unfortunate exacerbation of the temper of political controversy. Speeches at public meetings have been abusive and even violent; and there has been a marked deterioration in the quality of the slogans which are apparently an essential feature of political processions. In this State freedom of speech and freedom of association are complete. That freedom is something to be proud of. But it does entail responsibility. Freedom must not be allowed to degenerate into license. Speakers at public meetings must not fail to treat the persons of those who differ from them with respect and courtesy and to refrain from personal abuse (political views are of course always open to criticism and attack); and there must be no incitements to violence or law-breaking. Democracy cannot work unless these conditions are observed. I am glad to recognise that the leaders of the Prajamandal Party are alive to this consideration; and the Government has already shown its appreciation of the appeal which they recently made for moderation and restraint. One particular aspect which calls for mention is the abuse and vilification of the Police which has unfortunately become common. I believe that the Police force of this State—and I have had occasion to examine it very closely—is well desciplined and inspired by the highest principles of public service. Most of the abuse directed at it is entirely undeserved. This form of attack is cowardly because those against whom it is directed are prevented by the conditions of their service from defending themselves; and it is calculated to damage the morale and undermine the descipline of the force. Any complaint against a police officer, if made to me, will always receive the closest attention. A public meeting is not the proper place in which to voice these complaints.

The Budget which is to be introduced to-day reflects the economic conditions which I have just described. War-time revenue has begun to contract; but there is as yet no possibility of any material reduction in war-time expenditure. In order to provide employment for as large a number of people as possible the Government has provided for a great expansion of public works. Consider the figures for a moment. The accounts of 1120 closed with a surplus of Rs. 23·80 lakhs, of which we have placed Rs. 15 lakhs to the Revenue Reserve Fund. In the Revised Estimate for the current year we are providing for Rs. 30 lakhs more revenue and Rs. 37 lakhs more expenditure than were anticipated when the Budget Estimates were prepared a year ago. The increased revenue comes chiefly from the Railway, with smaller contributions by Forests, Income-tax and Excise. The increase in expenditure is spread over a number of departments and provides for such matters as the improvement in the pay of Primary School teachers, increased subsidies offered as an inducement to cultivators to grow more food, especially vegetables, and so forth. For next year we anticipate a revenue lower by Rs. 2 lakhs—in spite of the fact that we have provided for the transfer of Rs. 25 lakhs from the Revenue Reserve Fund to pay for a number of Post-war Development Schemes which we propose to start—and expenditure higher by Rs. 31 lakhs than that of this year. We expect a fall in the revenue contributed by the Railway, by Forests, and from the Excess Profits Tax which has been repealed. The increase in expenditure is mainly under the heads, Public Works, Education, Medical, Panchayats, Interest, Police and Land Revenue, and represents new road works, provision for the construction of a T. B. Sanatorium, further revision of teachers' pay, extension of noon-feeding to more schools, an increased contribution for village improvement, payment of a full year's interest on the loan raised last year, new equipment for the Police and the development of the fishing industry.

The Budget thus provides for an acceleration of the development programme by which it is hoped to improve living conditions in all parts of the State and to provide a higher standard of amenities. But it is clear that with falling revenues it is impossible to continue this development unless new sources of taxation can be tapped. The Budget leaves a gap of Rs. 31·81 lakhs uncovered. Either new taxes must be raised to cover it, or there must be a corresponding reduction in the expenditure which is planned. Otherwise the credit of the State will suffer. The Government believes that the true interests of the people of the State require that expenditure on these beneficial objects should be maintained and even increased. It has accordingly

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allowed provision to be made for this expenditure in the confident belief that the House will accept its proposals to introduce a Sales Tax and to revise the rates of income-tax in such a way as to bring them into closer approximation to those prevailing in British India. We hope to raise about Rs. 4 lakhs by the revision of the rates of Income-tax, and Rs. 29 lakhs by the Sales Tax at one per cent, and so to balance the Budget.

With the beginning of work on the Poringalkuthu Hydro-Electric Scheme we may really feel that our Post-war Development Works have started. A special Engineer has been appointed for the execution of this work and has joined duty within the last few days. It is our earnest hope that progress on this scheme may be rapid and successful and that the completion of the project may be the prelude to great industrial developments. It had been my hope that the Post-war Planning Committees would have finished their work by this time; but this has not been possible and they still need some time to complete their labours. The Government however have thought it well to anticipate in some measure the report of these Committees and to make such provision in the Budget as will ensure that funds are available for such works as may be given top priority by the Committees. Work is actually being started only on projects regarding the need for which there cannot possibly be more than one opinion, *viz.*, the Hydro-Electric project and the T. B. Sanatorium.

I have made my speech short; for I understand that both Ministers intend to speak after me, and the Finance Member will as usual explain the details of the Budget later. It only remains for me to commend the financial proposals to the acceptance of the House as providing a start for those post-war developments to which we have been looking forward for so long.

Speech by the Minister for Public Health

Mr. Parambi Lonappen *(Minister for Public Health):* Mr. President, Sir,

This is the second opportunity afforded to me to address this House as its representative in charge of the administration of the transferred subjects. With the end of the world war sudden changes are taking place in the political, economical and social life of the people throughout the world. Cochin and its people are also keenly experiencing the changes and developments all around. A notable event of the year is the ascension to the Gadi of His Highness Sri Kerala Varma. His Highness has by the epoch-making Proclamation of 21st March 1946 transferred a few more important departments to the control of the Minister and has promised to transfer more departments hereafter. His Highness has also appointed another Minister to share with me the responsibility for the administration of the transferred departments. The new Minister assumed his office on 15th May 1946, and till then as I was in sole charge of the administration of the departments, Public Health, Panchayats, Agriculture, Ayurveda, Veterinary, Village Courts, Co-operation, Industries, Uplift of the Depressed Classes and Fisheries, you will naturally expect from me a short review of the working of these departments in the past one year.

Public Health.—This year also there was an outbreak of small-pox in several parts of the State. It was not a peculiar curse to our State alone. The epidemic was more severe in the Taluks of Trichur, Talappalli and Chittur. Preventive measures suth as mass vaccination, disinfection of infected houses, etc., were done promptly and the disease was brought under control. Free distribution of rice and kerosene oil was made to the poor and deserving patients. To cope with the increased work in connection with the epidemic an additional staff consisting of a Homeopathic Physician, 6 Sanitary Inspectors, 23 vaccinators and 12 disinfecting coolies were appointed. To take advice on the further preventive measures to be taken, I summoned a meeting of the Advisory Committee for Medicine and Public Health on 27th February 1946 and, as advised by them, the mid-wives of the Public Health Department were given training in vaccination with a view to carry on intensive vaccination work. A Vaccination Training Class is also conducted by the Department. 84 candidates are undrgoing training now. Some of the local small-pox relief committees organised by selfless workers in different parts of the State had been heartily co-operating with the Public Health Department to arrest the spread of the disease and to render medical aid to the affected persons. I thank them all for the humanitarian work that they have done in this connection. Though plague made its casual appearnce in Mattancheri Town in Vrischigam this year, it was not allowed to play its havoc due to the timely preventive maasures taken. The anti-malarial operations carried on in the Nelliampathies are becoming more and more successful. This year the incidence of Malaria in those hilly regions has been

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